

Appl. No. 10/085,921

Amendment Dated June 30, 2004

Reply to Office Action of September 29, 2003

In the Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended). A mug handle cover for marking a mug, comprising:

a top being approximately as wide as a handle and having an interior top, said interior top abutting the handle;

a first side extending in a direction from said top and having an inward cone-shaped protrusion on said first side, said protrusion having a base, said base being distal to said top; and

a second side extending in the direction from said top and being laterally opposed to said first side;

said first side and said second side being configured to releasably hold the handle.

Claim 2 (Original). The mug handle cover according to claim 1, wherein said first and second sides are at least as wide as an exterior side of the handle.

Claim 3 (Canceled).

Appl. No. 10/085,921

Amendment Dated June 30, 2004

Reply to Office Action of September 29, 2003

Claim 4 (Previously Presented). The mug handle cover according to claim 1, wherein said protrusion is one-and-one-half millimeters thick.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented). The mug handle cover according to claim 1, including a further inward protrusion on said second side, said further inward protrusion opposing said first inward protrusion.

Claim 6 (Canceled).

Claim 7 (Previously Presented). The mug handle cover according to claim 1, wherein:

a midpoint is provided on said first side; and

a point of said cone is at said midpoint.

Claim 8 (Original). The mug handle cover according to claim 1, including a mark on a surface selected from the group consisting of said top, said first side, and said second side.

Claim 9 (Original). The mug handle cover according to claim 8, wherein said mark is a color.

Appl. No. 10/055,921

Amendment Dated June 30, 2004

Reply to Office Action of September 29, 2003

Claim 10 (Original). The mug handle cover according to claim 8, wherein said mark is molded in said surface.

Claim 11 (Original). The mug handle cover according to claim 8, wherein said mark is etched in said surface.

Claim 12 (Original). The mug handle cover according to claim 8, wherein said mark is a label.

Claim 13 (Original). The mug handle cover according to claim 12, wherein said label includes adhesive for attaching said label to said surface.

Claim 14 (Original). The mug handle cover according to claim 12, wherein said label is thermally bonded to said surface.

Claim 15 (Original). The mug handle cover according to claim 1, wherein:

said top includes a groove formed therein; and

a label rests in said groove and attaches to said top.

Claim 16 (Original). The mug handle cover according to claim 8, wherein said mark is an advertisement.

Appl. No. 10/085,921

Amendment Dated June 30, 2004

Reply to Office Action of September 29, 2003

Claim 17 (Canceled).

Claim 18 (Previously Presented). The mug handle cover according to claim 1, wherein said top is arcuate.

Claim 19 (Previously Presented). The mug handle cover according to claim 1, wherein said top complements a shape of the handle.

Claim 20 (Original). The mug handle cover according to claim 1, wherein said top has two opposing parallel edges and said first and second sides connect to said top along said edges.

Claim 21 (Original). The mug handle cover according to claim 1, wherein said top and said first and second sides are constructed from a thermoplastic.

Claim 22 (Original). The mug handle cover according to claim 21, wherein said top and said first and second sides are constructed by a method selected from the group consisting of extrusion, thermoforming, vacuum forming, rotating molding, rotary molding, resin transfer molding, sandwich molding, injection stamping, blow molding-injection, blow molding-extrusion, injection molding, and reaction injection molding.

Appl. No. 10/085,921

Amendment Dated June 30, 2004

Reply to Office Action of September 29, 2003

Claim 23 (Original). The mug handle cover according to claim 21, wherein said thermoplastic is selected from the group consisting of acetals, acrylics, actylonitrile-butadine-styrene, actylonitrile-butadine-styrene polycarbonate alloy, actylonitrile-chlorinated pe-styrene, actylonitrile-styrene-acrylic, actylonitrile-styrene-acrylic polycarbonate alloy, alkyd, allyis, asa polycarbonate alloy, bismaleimide, cellulosics, cyanatester, epoxy resins, ethylene-acid copolymer, ethylene-ethyl acrylate, ethylene-methyl acrylate, ethylene-vinyl acutate, ethylene-vinyl alcohol, ethylene-vinyl silane copolymer, fluoropolymers, foam rubber, ionomer, ketone-based polymer, liquid-crystal polymers, melamine, urea, neoprene, phenolic, polyamide, polyamide-imide, polycrylate, methacrylate-butadiene-styrene, nitrile-butadiene copolymer, polyarylether, polybutadiene, polybutylene, polybutylene terephthalate, polycarbonate alloy, polycarbonate, polycyclohexylenemethylene-terephthalute, polyesters, unsaturated, polyethylene, high density, polyethylene, linear low, polyethylene, polyethylene, naphalate, polyetheylene terephthalate, polyimides, polymethylpentene, polyimide, polyphenylene oxide, polyphenylene sulfide, polypropylene, polysobutylene, polysthylene, polystyrene, polytheremide, polyurethanes, polyvinyl acetate, polyvinyl alcohol, polyvinyl chloride flexible, polyvinyl rigid, pellets, polyvinyl rigid, powder, polyvinylidene chloride, silicone, styrene-

Appl. No. 10/085,921

Amendment Dated June 30, 2004

Reply to Office Action of September 29, 2003

acrylonitrile, styrene-butadiene copolymer, styrene-maleic anhydride, sulfone-based polymer, thermoplastic elastomers, and vinyl ester.

Claim 24 (Original). The mug handle cover according to claim 21, made by including a thermoplastic additive selected from the following group an acid scavenger, an adhesion promoter, an antifoaming agent, an antifogging agent, a antioxidant, an antiozonant, an antislip agent, an antistatic agent, an antitack agent, a bonding agent, a carbon black, a chain extender, a chelating agent, a complexing agent, a clarifying agent, a cling agent, a coloring agent, a defoamer, a deodorant, a desiccant, a dispersing agent, a emulsifier, a flattening agent, a fluorescent whitening agent, a fragrance, a fresh keeping agent, a gel inhibitor, a infra red filter, a inhibitor, a leveling agent, a matting agent, a gloss agent, a melt strength enhancer, a metal deactivator, a nucleating agent, a oxygen absorber, a peptizer, a photoinitiator, a polymerization inhibitor, a polymerization initiator, a release agent, a slip agent, a styrene suppressant, a tackifier, a thickening agent, a thixotropic agent, a titanium dioxide, a viscosity modifier, a wax, and a wetting agent.

Claim 25 (Currently Amended). A method for identifying a mug having a handle among a plurality of identical mugs, which comprises:

Appl. No. 10/085,921

Amendment Dated June 30, 2004

Reply to Office Action of September 29, 2003

providing a mug handle cover including:a top being approximately as wide as a handle;a first side extending in a direction from said top and
having an inward cone-shaped protrusion on said first
side, said protrusion having a base, said base being
distal to said top; anda second side extending in the direction from said top
and being laterally opposed to said first side;said first side and said second side being configured to
releasably hold the handle;marking a the mug handle cover to be unique;

releasably attaching the mug handle cover to the mug; and

releasing the mug handle cover from the mug when finished
drinking from the mug.

Claim 26 (Original). The method according to claim 25, which
further comprises clipping the mug handle cover to the handle
of the mug.

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Appl. No. 10/085,921

Amendment Dated June 30, 2004

Reply to Office Action of September 29, 2003

.. Claim 27 (Canceled).